

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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FM AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8418
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER
SECDEF WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 2782

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MASS KE US
SUBJECT: KENYAN ARMS ASSISTANCE DELEGATION AND A-37 AIRCRAFT

REFS: (A) STATE 041704 DTG 210040Z FEB 76
(B) CSAF 172318Z MAY 47 (AIR FORCE MIMEX OFFER NO. 213)
(C) SECDEF 192100Z JUL 74

1. REFERENCE (A) REPORTED RESULTS OF KENYAN ARMS DELEGATION VISIT TO WASHINGTON DURING FEB 76; AND STATED, WITH REGARD TO AVAILABILITY OF A-37 AIRCRAFT, THAT THE DELEGATION HAD BEEN ADVISED THAT US WILL NOT OFFER ATTACK AIRCRAFT (EITHER A-4 OR A-37) TO KENYA BECAUSE OF CONGRESSIONAL PROBLEMS SUCH OFFER WOULD RAISE, FACT IT IS AN OFFENSIVE WEAPON AND FACT US HAS NEVER SOLD ATTACK AIRCRAFT TO AFRICAN COUNTRY.

2. THAT POSITION WITH RESPECT TO A-37 IS CAUSE FOR SERIOUS CONCERN HERE SINCE ETHIOPIA STILL HAS PURCHASE OF A-37 AIRCRAFT UNDER ACTIVE CONSIDERATION, WITH USG ENCOURAGEMENT. IF PURCHASE IS CONSUMMATED, THE PROBLEM WITH KENYA IS CLEAR. IF ETHIOPIA IS NOW DENIED OPPORTUNITY OF THE

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PURCHASE ON THOSE GROUNDS AFTER BEING CLEARED FOR SUCH

PURCHASE NEARLY TWO YEARS AGO, THE PROBLEM IS EQUALLY OBVIOUS.

3. FACTS ARE THAT PURCHASE OF EXCESS A-37S WAS OFFERED BY STANDARD MIMEX OFFER (REF B) TO GRANT AID COUNTRIES IN MAY 74 (RETRANSMITTED TO MAAG ETHIOPIA BY USCINCEUR 201411Z MAY 74). GOE EXPRESSED INTEREST IN THAT OFFER. REF C DECLARED, PER EPMG FINDING OF 25 JUN 74, THAT A-37 NOT A SOPHISTICATED WEAPON SYSTEM FOR ETHIOPIA WITHIN MEANING OF SEC R, FMSA, AND THEREFORE NO PD REQUIRED TO EITHER SELL OR PROVIDE TO ETHIOPIA UNDER MAP. AS NEGOTIATIONS CONTINUED, INCREASE IN COST AND EELAY IN AVAILABILITY DATES RESULTED IN SEP 74 GOE CANCELLATION. TEN F-5A/B AIRCRAFT WERE ACQUIRED THROUGH MAP RESOURCES AS A SUBSTITUTE. IN OCTOBER 1975, A TEAM FROM ISA/DSAA VISITED ETHIOPIA AND BRIEFED MOND/ETAF OFFICIALS ON POSSIBILITY OF ACQUIRING A-37 AIRCRAFT TO REPLACE THEIR AGING FLEET OF TRAINING AIRCRAFT AND TO PERFORM THE DUAL ROLE OF CLOSE AIR SUPPORT FOR THE GROUND FORCES. AFTER THE DOD TEAM RETURNED TO CONUS AN A-37 REPRESENTATIVE FROM CESSNA ARRIVED IN NOV 75 AND PRESENTED BRIEFINGS TO MOND/ETAF OFFICIALS. IN JAN 76, AN ETAF TEAM VISITED THE CASSNA PLANT IN WICHITA, KANSAS, TO VIEW THE AIRCRAFT AND PRODUCTION FACILITY. BASED ON THESE MANY USG OVERTURES, PMGSE IS STILL ACTIVELY CONSIDERING PURCHASE OF A-37S.

4. IF LANGUAGE REF A IS TO APPLY TO ETHIOPIA (AS WELL AS KENYA) WE WILL BE REVERSING COURSE IN WAY HIGHLY ABRASIVE TO US-ETHIOPIAN RELATIONS. PLEASE CLARIFY.
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